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The Illinois State Flag or Banner.

The people of Illinois have contributed largely to all movements for the advancement of America. They have given men and resources to the nation both in peace and war. Whenever representatives from the various states meet for any purpose, delegates from Illinois occupy conspicuous positions. In such conventions and processions many states display distinctive banners, by which they may be recognized, but until the last session of the General Assembly, Illinois had no such flag or insignia.

For some years past, Mrs. Ella Park Lawrence, now honorary regent for Illinois Daughters of the American Revolution, formerly State Regent, had felt deeply the need of this for Illinois. Especially had she noted this in the beautiful Continental Memorial Hall in Washington, D. C., built by the National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution. In this impressive building, to which the Illinois D. A. R. has contributed so much in money and effort, Mrs. Lawrence particularly desired to see the flag of Illinois taking its place with the banners of other states. She began the work of building up a sentiment throughout the State, especially in the chapters of the Daughters of the American Revolution, in favor of securing through the General Assembly authority for the use of such a State flag or emblem.

Mrs. Lawrence worked zealously for several years and finally the Forty-ninth General Assembly of the State, by an act of 1915 authorized the use of such flag or banner.

The reports of the committees of the Daughters of the American Revolution giving a full account of the work of Mrs. Lawrence and her associates is herewith given:

Mrs. Lawrence was six years regent of the Rebecca Park Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution, Galesburg, Illinois. She was then State regent of Illinois Daughters of the American Revolution, for three years: 1911-1914. In 1916 she was made Honorary State Regent of Illinois for life.

Early in 1912 Mrs. Lawrence thought Illinois should have a State Flag, and began to work for it. Visiting and writing chapters to get their opinions, and promises of co-operation. In 1913 and 1914 she wrote several letters to each of the chapters in the State, and offered a prize of twenty-five dollars to the chapter sending a design for a State Flag, which would receive the highest vote of four judges. Thirty-five designs were submitted. The Judges were:

HON. LEWIS G. STEVENSON, Secretary of State;

HON. CHARLES C. CRAIG, Associate Judge of the Supreme Court of Illinois;

HON. FRANCIS G. BLAIR, Superintendent of Public Instruction; and

HON. HUGH MAGILL, JR., Member of the Art Commission of the State of Illinois.

These gentlemen awarded the prize of twenty-five dollars to Rockford Chapter.

Mrs. Lawrence by giving a prize hoped to awaken the interest of over forty-five hundred Daughters in Illinois. At the same time she herself wrote hundreds of letters to members of the Senate and House, stating her thought, and work for a flag for Illinois. In 1914 steps were taken to introduce a Bill for adoption of a State Flag. Mrs. Lawrence is greatly indebted and most appreciative for the valuable services given by our Secretary of State, Honorable Lewis G. Stevenson; Senator Raymond D. Meeker; and, Honorable Thomas N. Gorman, of the House of Representatives, who presented and worked with her for the Bill.

The Bill is entitled

SENATE BILL No. 446.

and is as follows:—

An Act to Authorize the Reproduction of the Emblem on the “Great Seal of the State of Illinois” for Use as a State Banner.

Whereas, it is useful and advantageous for a State to have a distinguishing insignia or banner for the use of its military, civic and other organizations and of individuals when meeting

or co-operating with the representatives of other states; and

Whereas, the great State of Illinois has no such emblem or insignia fixed or designated by any law; and

Whereas, the use of the great seal of the State of Illinois is prohibited by Statute, except as directed by law, and it appearing that the emblem upon said great seal would be a most appropriate insignia for the uses indicated herein; therefore,

SECTION 1. Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois, represented in the General Assembly: That the reproduction of the emblem only on the "great seal of the State of Illinois" be authorized and permitted when reproduced in black or in the National colors upon a white sheet or background for use as a State Banner or insignia under the conditions and subject to the restrictions provided by the laws of the United States and of the State of Illinois as to the United States or State Flag or ensign.

SECTION 2. It shall be lawful for the Secretary of State as custodian of the "great seal of the State of Illinois" to permit at his discretion the inspection and examination of said seal for the purpose of copying or reproducing the emblem only on the same for the uses and purposes authorized by this law.

Filed July 6th, 1915.

Full reports were given at October, 1915, State Conference. It was a real work, and Mrs. Lawrence though sometimes discouraged, kept at it, and felt repaid when success crowned her desire and labors.

Mrs. Lawrence at once had the first official Illinois State Flags made by the Meyers Military Flag-Shop Company, Washington, D. C. They are three by five feet, in size, of white silk, and made as per requirement by the State. A permit for making was given by Honorable L. G. Stevenson, the Secretary of State of Illinois. One flag was given Honorable L. G. Stevenson; one to the Daughters of the American Revolution of Illinois; one to hang in our Memorial Continental Hall in Washington; and one to the "Illinois State Historical Society."

The Illinois State Flag is one result of the work of Daughters of the American Revolution for patriotism. It has met with unstinted commendation of Daughters of the American Revolution in Illinois, and unanimous and unqualified praise of the National Congress of Daughters of the American Revolution, held in Washington last April, where it now hangs with the flags of so many of our sister states. We must not forget that this happy result has been made possible only through the thought and persistent effort of Mrs. George A. Lawrence, in its behalf.

(Signed) ANNE M. BAHNSEN,
State Regent of Illinois.

(Signed) JESSIE S. PAGE,
Ex. State Regent of Illinois.

(Signed) MRS. JOHN H. HANLEY,
Vice State Regent of Ill. D. A. R.

June, 1916.

Galesburg, Illinois, October 18, 1915.

To the State Regent and Daughters of the Illinois
Daughters of the American Revolution,
Nineteenth Annual Conference.

The undersigned special Committee to secure for the State of Illinois the adoption of a State Flag for Illinois, if possible, would respectfully report:

The movement for the accomplishment of this laudable purpose had its origin in a circular letter, issued on April 1, 1914, by Ella Park Lawrence (then State Regent of the Illinois Daughters of the American Revolution.) This letter was suggested by the fact that nearly all of the States of the Union had adopted a distinctive flag, which could be used on occasions with special reference to the identification of the State as such, and the feeling that Illinois was entitled to maintain its own insignia in common with the other states. The circular letter (copy of which is hereto attached) suggested the undertaking of a campaign to bring about the adoption of such a flag by the State of Illinois, by a state-wide movement, looking towards the passage of necessary legislation and the selec-

tion of some suitable design for a State Flag, when proper legislation was provided.

A copy of this letter (April, 1914) was sent to the Regent of every Chapter in the State of Illinois, and in this letter the then State Regent (Mrs. G. A. Lawrence) offered a prize of Twenty-five dollars to be awarded the Chapter presenting the best design therefor. It, also, suggested the appointment of a committee of Illinois representative citizens to pass upon the design submitted and to award the prize therefor. This did not involve the choice of a design for the State Flag, but was issued with the thought that it would stimulate interest in the proposition, and be of advantage in bringing about the desired result.

While this circular was mailed to the Regent of every Chapter, within the State, but one response was received by the State Regent, before the expiration of her term of office. After the election of Mrs. Page as our State Regent, and in December, 1914, I was notified that she wished me to take up and carry out the plan I had suggested, and in consequence of this appointment, I issued a second circular letter, dated January 5, 1915 (a copy of which is attached hereto) calling attention to the suggestion of a competitive contest for the best design, and again offering a prize of Twenty-five dollars to the Chapter submitting the best design.

I am very glad to say that this circular letter met with a very considerable response, and that thirty-five designs were submitted by different Chapters of the State, and were in my hands by February 1, 1915.

I am making this statement for the purpose of showing the general interest taken by the Illinois Daughters in the purpose for which we were striving.

Carrying out the suggestion in the first circular, as to the selection of Judges, the following persons were selected to constitute the Board of Judges.

HON. LEWIS G. STEVENSON, Secretary of State, and Keeper
of the Great Seal of the State;

HON. FRANCIS G. BLAIR, Superintendent of Public Instruction;

HON. HUGH MAGILL, JR., Member of the Art Commission of the State of Illinois;

HON. CHARLES C. CRAIG, Associate Judge of the Supreme Court of Illinois.

The designs were submitted to this Board and resulted in the awarding of the prize to the design submitted by the Rockford Chapter.

This statement is made only for the purpose of illustrating the method taken to arouse not only the interest of the Daughters in the work, but to call attention in a public way to the fact that the Daughters of the American Revolution of the State of Illinois had enlisted themselves to bring about its accomplishment. It has nothing to do with the result of my work under the appointment of our State Regent.

Steps were taken to introduce a Bill, being the first step in necessary legislation for the adoption of a State Flag, and we are indebted to the valuable services of Honorable Raymond D. Meeker, Senator from the 24th Senatorial District of the State of Illinois, who introduced a Senate Bill for that purpose, asking at the same time that as such committeeman, I should make any suggestions for the betterment of the Bill, so that he might more adequately represent our purpose in urging its passage.

It transpired that considerable opposition developed from various sources, (which it is not necessary to recapitulate) against the adoption of a State Flag as such, and conference was had with Senator Meeker, the Chairman of the Legislative Bureau, and others interested, with the purpose of securing some legislation, which would accomplish our purpose, during a session, that was already over-crowded with work, and in which many hundred bills already introduced must necessarily fail of passage.

A Bill was finally introduced by Senator Meeker, being

SENATE BILL NO. 446 IN HOUSE,
entitled: —

A BILL

For an Act to authorize the reproduction of the emblem on the
“great seal of the State of Illinois” for use as a State
Banner, and which is as follows:

Whereas, It is useful and advantageous for a State to have
a distinguishing insignia or banner for the use of its military,
civic and other organizations, and, of individuals when meet-
ing or co-operating with the representatives of other states;
and

Whereas, The great State of Illinois has no such emblem or
insignia fixed or designated by any law; and

Whereas, The use of the great seal of the State of Illinois is
prohibited by Statute, except as directed by law, and it ap-
pearing that the emblem upon said great seal would be a most
appropriate insignia for the uses indicated herein; therefore,

SECTION 1. Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illi-
nois, represented in the General Assembly: That the produc-
tion of the emblem only on the “great seal of the State of Illi-
nois” be authorized and permitted when reproduced in black
or in the National colors upon a white sheet or background
for use as a State banner, or insignia, under the directions and
subject to the restrictions provided by the laws of the United
States and of the State of Illinois as to the United States or
State Flag or ensign.

SECTION 2. It shall be lawful for the Secretary of State as
custodian of the “Great Seal of the State of Illinois” to permit
at his discretion the inspection and examination of said seal
for the purpose of copying or reproducing the emblem only on
the same for the uses and purposes authorized by this law.

This Bill, after passage in the Senate, was sent to the House
of Representatives, and in that body was in charge of the
Honorable Thomas N. Gorman, of Peoria County, and we are
indebted to his valuable services, in spite of a calendar already
crowded, for the ultimate passage of the Bill as copied above.

It is now the law of the State, and we are authorized to reproduce in black, or in the National colors, upon a white sheet or background, for use as a State banner or insignia, the Great Seal of the State of Illinois; and it is available for our use as an organization as a distinctive State Flag.

I think the Daughters of the State of Illinois may well congratulate themselves upon the speedy completion of their work in this behalf. We all know that the last session of our Legislature was an unusually busy one and that hundreds (perhaps thousands) of bills failed of passage; many of them for lack of time and many of them undoubtedly most worthy.

We are especially indebted for the unstinted services and suggestions of Honorable Lewis G. Stevenson, Secretary of State; Senator Raymond D. Meeker; Representative Thomas N. Gorman; also, the head of the Legislative Bureau, who assisted in the draft of the Bill as passed.

Our thanks are also due to the Board of Judges, who although unusually busy men, so graciously decided the contest among our Chapters. Allow me to suggest that some action be taken by this National Conference, in appreciation of the services of these gentlemen.

Respectfully submitted,

ELLA PARK LAWRENCE,
Galesburg, Ill.

This report was read March 29th, 1916, at the twentieth annual conference of Daughters of the American Revolution, held in Ottawa, Illinois.

In February, 1916, Mrs. Lawrence secured from the Honorable Secretary of State the permit for using the emblem on the "great seal of the State of Illinois," and she ordered five white silk flags with the emblem in National colors on, made. She expects to present to the State Conference of Illinois D. A. R. one of these flags, *the first Illinois State Flags* made, March 29, 1916.

Flags given by Mrs. Lawrence to

1. Hon. Lewis G. Stevenson, Secretary of State;

2. Daughters of the American Revolution in Illinois. (The State Regent to be its keeper).
 3. National Society Daughters of the American Revolution. (To hang in Memorial Continental Hall, Washington, D. C.)
 4. Rebecca Parke Chapter, Galesburg, Ill.
 5. Illinois State Historical Society.
- March, 1916, flags were made in Washington, D. C., by Meyer's Military Shop.